

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL NATO CAPITALS PRIORITY
INFO USNMR SHAPE BRUSSELS BELGIUM
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY
USSACLANT
USLOCINCLANT
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN GERMANY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 070746

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: NATO, AWACS

SUBJECT: DPC PERMREPS CONSIDERATION OF NATO AWACS PACKAGE
ON MARCH 22, 1978 -

REF:A)USNATO 2511 DTG 101421Z MAR 78
B) USNATO 2824 DTG 171872 MAR 78; C) STATE 69843 DTG
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1. INTRODUCTION. NATO AWACS PACKAGE IS A COMPREHENSIVE
PROPOSAL FOR PROCUREMENT OF 18 E-3A A/C BY NATO, WHICH
WILL BE INTEROPERABLE WITH 11 UK NIMROD AIRCRAFT.
PROPOSAL ADDRESSES ALL ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM, INCLUDING
FINANCIAL SHARING. ON MARCH 22, PERMREPS WILL BE ASKED
TO ACCEPT PACKAGE FOR CONSIDERATION IN CAPITALS WITH
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A VIEW TO APPROVAL AT OR BEFORE DPC MINISTERIAL MEETING
IN MID-MAY.

2. ALL POSTS EXCEPT REJKJAVIK, PARIS, LONDON SHOULD MAKE
THE FOLLOWING POINTS AT APPROPRIATE LEVELS IN BOTH
MINISTERIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND MINISTRIES OF DEFENSE:

-- AWACS PROVIDES ONLY OPPORTUNITY TO ADEQUATELY MEET THE LOW-LEVEL THREAT POSED BY WARSAW PACT. FAILURE OF THE PROGRAM AT THIS JUNCTURE COULD JEOPARDIZE THE WHOLE

NATO LONG-TERM PROGRAM BY CALLING INTO QUESTION THE SURVIVABILITY OF OTHER ALLIANCE CAPABILITIES. THE ALLIANCE HAS BEEN WORKING ON THE NATO AWACS PROGRAM SINCE 1973, HAS HAD A SPECIAL DPC MEETING AT DEFENSE MINISTER LEVEL IN 1977, AND NOW AT LAST HAS A PACKAGE PROPOSAL THAT IS CLOSE TO ACCEPTANCE BY ALL ALLIES.

-- THE US IS PROVIDING THE AWACS CAPABILITY FOR NORTH AMERICA WITH ITS OWN NATIONAL RESOURCES, AND WOULD HAVE SOME POTENTIAL FOR REINFORCING THE NATO FORCE IN A CRISIS. THE US IS ALSO WILLING TO CONSIDER PAYING SOME \$800 MILLION OUT OF \$1,900 MILLION OF R D RECOUPMENT. THUS EUROPE IS NOT BEING ASKED TO CARRY AN UNREASONABLE SHARE OF THIS ALLIANCE PROGRAM.

--TO DATE THE NATO AWACS PROGRAM HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY AN ALLIANCE-WIDE EFFORT. DESPITE THEIR ECONOMIC CONDITION, THE ITALIANS MAY BE ABLE TO MAKE A MEANINGFUL CONTRIBUTION AT A LATER TIME.

-- AS A MINIMAL INDICATION OF SUPPORT WE SHOULD TRY TO ENSURE THAT ALL ALLIED PERMREPS ON MARCH 22 ALLOW
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THE AWACS PACKAGE PROPOSAL TO BE FORWARDED TO GOVERNMENTS FOR REVIEW.

-- REFERRAL TO GOVERNMENTS IS CRITICAL FOR THE US SINCE WE MUST CARRY A HIGH SHARE OF INITIAL PROGRAM COSTS AND MUST THEREFORE PROCEED WITH CONSULTATIONS WITH CONGRESS ON ADDING SOME \$100 MILLION TO PLANNED AWACS BUDGET FOR FY 1979.

-- NATO AND BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS CAN BEGIN IMMEDIATELY TO RESOLVE ANY PROBLEMS THAT REMAIN.

3. FOR BRUSSELS, ROME AND BONN. YOU SHOULD MAKE ABOVE POINTS DIRECTLY WITH MINISTER OF DEFENSE OR AT THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE LEVEL. WE BELIEVE THAT THE FRG, BECAUSE OF CHANGE IN MINISTRY, AND BELGIUM AND ITALY, BECAUSE OF ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, ARE THE MOST LIKELY TO SEEK POSTPONEMENT OF CONSIDERING THE NATO AWACS PROPOSAL.

4. FOR USNATO. MISSION SHOULD APPROACH ALLIED MISSIONS AT APPROPRIATE LEVELS AND MAKE POINTS OUTLINED ABOVE.

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